



Department Updates

Barron County

July 2011

County Clerk

DeeAnn Cook, County Clerk

75 people attended the training we held regarding issues that were uncovered in the recount. Municipal Clerk's and their Chief Inspectors were invited. I requested and received permission from GAB for the training to count toward the required hours of training so everyone in attendance was able to get credit for 2 hours. Special thanks to City of Rice Lake Employees Kathy Morse, Shanon Breed and Bud for their help setting up and the use of their facility.

We gave it a try for a full year but have decided to discontinue providing DMV services. When

we initially signed on, the vendor guaranteed that we would have immediate support when questions came up and that just was not the case. In a year's time, we usually had 1 or 2 inquiries a month and most of the time the request was for something "out of the ordinary" that we needed assistance with. We would call and email the support line but on several occasions, we didn't get a response back for hours, which was just not satisfactory when we had a customer standing at our counter. With the full service DMV being is right up the road in Rice Lake, we decided that our service was not beneficial due to the fact that what we could do was so limited and we

couldn't get the support we needed within a reasonable time.

There are recall elections in various districts throughout the state in July and August but none in Barron County. With the passage of Voter ID, starting in 2012 voters will be required to show photo ID in order to vote. Most of the forms used for election have been revised. Another new requirement will be for voters to sign one of the poll lists before receiving a ballot. Anyone physically incapable of signing due to a disability is exempt. Absentee voters will also be required to send a copy of their ID.

Personnel Update

- *Annual Employee Recognition Picnic will be held August 18th. All employees are invited along with County Board Supervisors. Please RSVP by August 9th.*
- *Employees not covered by a collective bargaining agreement will first see the employee portion of WRS deducted from their August 26th pay check (5.8% for general municipal and 6.65% for county elected official in 2011). Current collective bargaining agreements all expire 12/31/11 and as a result, those employees (excluding public safety) will begin paying the employee WRS portion on 1/1/12.*

Justice Center

Judge James Babler

The rotunda of the Barron County Justice Center was decorated for the Independence Day Holiday. The three Circuit Judges: James Babler; Timothy Doyle; and James Babbitt wanted to decorate the Justice Center for patriotic holidays. The Judges purchased patriotic bunting with their personal funds to be hung along the upper railing of the rotunda in the Justice Center.

The decorations are reminiscent of earlier days when patriotic bunting and flags were hung in government buildings for national holidays. The decorations symbolize our pride and appreciation for the freedoms and rights we as citizens enjoy in this great country.

The patriotic bunting will be hung the week before and the week after all patriotic holidays. The Judges encourage the citizens of Barron County to stop by the Justice Center and walk into the rotunda to see the decorations now or around the next patriotic holiday.



Health & Human Services

Judy Demers, Director

Barron County has been selected to participate in the next round of implementation of the Alternative Response program, which is a less intrusive, non-adversarial, non-threatening approach to respond to reports of child maltreatment. This family assessment approach enhances parental engagement and increases the likelihood of voluntary participation in services. Alternative Response began as a pilot in July, 2010, and it is anticipated that it will be implemented statewide over the next 2 to 3 years.

Barron County has been selected to participate in the County Data Leadership Project. The goal of the project is to help counties in using data to improve performance in child welfare. We were

one of eight counties selected to participate. There will be two tiers of counties. The first tier group (of which Barron County is part) will receive technical assistance in data collection and analysis of data; the second tier of counties will receive technical assistance more tailored for those who have in-house data analysts.

DHHS is exploring opportunities to organize into a consortium for delivery of Income Maintenance (IM) services. As part of the passage of the 2011-13 budget, 10 consortia are to be implemented statewide with each consortium providing services to an average of 40,000 cases. We are exploring partnering with counties to the north which are part of the same Family Care district, and we are also giving considera-

tion to opportunities with the counties to the south with whom we have worked on other initiatives. Counties must submit their plans for organization of the consortia to the state by October 1, 2011. The budget requires that the state approve the composition of these consortia no later than October 31, 2011. The state is required to enter into contracts with these consortia beginning January 1, 2012. The budget also requires counties, in CY 12 and CY 13, to contribute funds to their respective consortia for the administration of IM programs in an amount that is at least equal to the amount the county expended for those purposes in CY 2009. In Barron County, that amount is \$183,000.

Finance

Jodi Busch, Lead Fiscal Coordinator

June was a very busy month in the Finance Department. Our auditing firm, Larson-Allen, was onsite from May 23-June 16 conducting the audit of the 2010 financials. The audit went very well and we should be receiving our final numbers in July. Upon completion of the audit, staff dedicated some time in our storage room purging old records and making room for the new. It feels good in our office having everything put away and organized again.

As one audit concluded, a new audit began. We were selected by the Department of Revenue as a County in which they wanted

to visit and conduct an examination of our Sales Tax records for years 2007-2010. The audit began June 22nd when DOR Staff were onsite gathering information to take back to their office. We should have an opinion sometime in July as to our compliance.

But the fun doesn't stop there...We were also selected by the IRS to participate in an Advance Refunding Bonds Compliance Check. This compliance check was implemented to determine adherence to certain requirements with our refunding bond issues. A refunding bond issue is a bond issue the proceeds of which are used to pay principal, interest or redemption price on a

prior issue of bonds also referred to as "refunded bonds". In 2010, we refinanced three separate debts with General Obligation Refunding Bonds. With the help of our financial advisors, Ehlers & Associates, we were able to provide all of the necessary information to the IRS and hope that the compliance check is now completed.

July will be the start of the formal budget process for Barron County. Departments can expect to see their budget worksheets in their baskets around July 8th, with their budgets being due back to the Finance Department August 19th. The year is going fast!

Circuit Court

Judge James Babler

On May 17, 2011 a team from Barron County attended a Firearms Surrender Training Session in Weston, WI. The training session was designed to assist counties in setting up protocols for the surrender of firearms in domestic abuse restraining order cases. Wisconsin law requires the surrender of those firearms, but the practical procedures for the surrender and compliance are not set forth in the statutes.

Barron County was the only county in the State to send a full team of the recommended professionals! The Barron County team included Judge Jim Babler, Assistant District Attorney Maureen Boyle, Victim Witness Coordinator Mary Hogan, Sheriff's Detective Dave Kuffel, and Domestic Abuse Advocate Kristy Moran.

Subsequent to the training session, the team has met and agreed on a protocol for

Barron County which we hope to have in place in the next few months. The firearms surrender protocol is crucial to ensuring the safety of domestic abuse victims and police officers who respond to those domestic abuse situations.

I am proud to note that Barron County Departments are committed to addressing this serious problem. It is only with the cooperation from all of the Departments involved that this can be a success.